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## **One-time monetary assistance for low-income Californians Fact Sheet**

The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) has been aggressive in efforts to draw down available American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funding. Recently, CDSS submitted an application to the federal government for funding for short-term, one-time benefits for low-income Californians – called Non-Recurrent Short-Term Benefits. The funding is intended to help low-income Californians meet a specific crisis situation or to address a specific episode of need. The application has requested \$110 million from October 2008 through March 2010. CDSS estimates that total Non-Recurrent funding through September 2010 should approach approximately \$240 million.

### **What Are Non-Recurrent Short-Term Benefits?**

These short-term, one-time benefits are designed for qualified low-income Californians and are intended to deal with a specific crisis situation or episode of need. These benefits are not intended to meet recurrent or ongoing needs and will not extend beyond 4 months.

Some examples of what counties are proposing to allow:

- Emergency food, utility vouchers to avoid shut-off of utilities, school vouchers to assist with the purchase of school supplies and clothing, short-term housing assistance such as eviction prevention funding, emergency shelter or moving assistance, and services to support family reunification for eligible families such as purchases of items for the safe return of a child into the home.
- Housing benefits/services will encompass the majority of these benefits, followed by vouchers for clothing, school supplies and food.

### **Who is Eligible for Non-Recurrent Short-Term Benefits?**

In addition to welfare to work program (CalWORKs) families, certain families who are not receiving CalWORKs may also qualify. To qualify, a family must have an annual income of less than 200 percent of the federal poverty level (less than \$44,100 a year for a family of 4). These families must meet certain criteria that include:

1. A family with a minor child
2. A non-custodial parent not residing with the minor child
3. A woman in her third trimester of pregnancy
4. A family in which a minor child has been temporarily absent (removed from the home due to abuse or neglect for less than 12 months) and parent(s) is participating in family reunification services.

### **Current Situation**

All 58 counties plan to offer these benefits with the available funding. Counties are working within their own departments, Food Banks, community based organizations, and local utility companies to add and expand opportunities for CalWORKs and other low-income families.

### **CDSS Contact Information**

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